

2/19/78

Plausibility is no longer relevant. The theory that Nosenko was a disinformation agent is not even reasonable when it is compared with what he told the CIA about other than Oswald and it cannot serve the alleged purpose of disinforming, based on what is known of what Nosenko said to the FBI. It likewise is apparent that Nosenko has no fear of being killed or he would not be making himself available to others, like Barron and Epstein. That Nosenko was being interviewed and for a book I knew several years ago. My source was I think an AP reporter named Martin. I know it was AP. So how secret was Nosenko keeping himself, how much was the CIA worried about him?

If the CIA really believed this nonsense it could and would have broken Nosenko during the three years it kept him isolated at Camp Pearry. McCone ultimately told Dan Schorr on camera that the CIA was satisfied that Nosenko stacked okay.

Note that the Russians did NOT supply records confirming Nosenko's story. And that as of the time he told this story it was not known that Oswald was anti-Soviet, part of what the Russian files disclose, according to Nosenko. Not knowing about Nosenko in late 1963 and early 1965 I do go into this in Whitewash, from the available WC records.

There is an element of desperation in all of this. Part of the Post's account of the New York article reflects a strange approach to a several years ago, roughly coinciding in time with both the amending of FOIA and the Rockefeller Commission.

The CIA rehired Rocca to do a report for the Rockefeller Commission. Rocca takes this incredible line in that report. He goes farther and tries to rebut the thoroughly discredited Alvarado Ugarte fabrications. They are designed to make Oswald the assassin with Cuban backing.

Rocca means Angleton. Angleton is publicly credited with being an Epstein consultant. The prior CIA/Angleton/Barron/Readers Digest connections need not be repeated here.

I received several phone calls from a man with a heavy Russian accent. He called himself "Mr. Martin." He wanted to meet with me. He appeared to be reluctant to come here. He indicated he lived in the Wheaton area, without identifying that DC suburb.

By "Mr. Martin" I arranged a meeting in Rockville on a day I had to be in Rockville anyway. We chatted and chipped together for a while. He identified me by my key carrying a copy of Whitewash IV (for which he has never paid) while I browsed in the Wechsinger store. (That he has a home with a garden is apparent from the seeds he purchased.) We then lunched at an inexpensive restaurant adjacent to Wechsinger's. Mr. Martin wanted anonymity so I made no effort to watch him as he left and get the identification of his auto.

Mr. Martin was not merely anti-Soviet and anti-KGB - he was anti anti-Soviets, especially Nosenko. He was bitter and illogical in his denunciations of Nosenko. He had initially raised the Nosenko subject with me by phone. I did not raise it with him. It is my recollection that he did this in terms of Barron's book WGB.

If I had wanted to identify Mr. Martin, who is pretty certainly a Soviet defector and with little less certainly a KGB defector, it would have been simple. An unknown associate could have parked in the same lot and photographed us as we walked, him as he left in his car, and perhaps have followed him without detection. So there was some risk in seeing me and meeting with me in public, particularly as open a place as the Wechsinger store and its parking lot. It is hardly within the CIA's claims of "national security" interest in secrecy related to defectors.

I am not now certain but I believe that Mr. Martin mentioned the name Golitsin, mentioned in the news account. He could, in fact, have seen Golitsin. Prior disagreements with Nosenko could account for the intensity of his dislike and the vacuousness of his denunciations of Nosenko - no proof, no reason and no hiding of hatred. After 10 years.

This guy wanted to pin the JFK assassination on the KGB and on Nosenko as co-conspirator. He also knew of other defectors. As I recall mentioned where some worked. Of course I have no way of knowing if truthfully or if he spoke of himself. I think one worked at WH as a translator. (His English was good but accented, indicative of long contact with the language as spoken here.)

Hoover Alleged Duped by a Spy

1978 By Jack Egan
Washington Post Staff Writers

NEW YORK—Former FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was duped over a period of years by a Soviet KGB intelligence agent code-named "Fedora" who offered his services to the FBI in 1962 but was deliberately providing the FBI director with "disinformation," according to an article in the issue of New York magazine released yesterday.

The article, which deals with "moles", or high level counter-agents implanted in rival intelligence organizations, is based on an upcoming book by Edward Jay Epstein, the author of "Inquest," which 12 years ago severely criticized the Warren Commission and its report.

The new book, "Legend," claim that Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President Kennedy, was recruited by the Soviet KGB in Japan in the late 1950s, where as a Marine Oswald worked as a radar operator at the Atsugi U2 base. It also speculates that Oswald provided U2 information to the Soviets which they used in the interrogation of the late Francis Gary Powers, the U2 pilot who was shot down over the Soviet Union in 1960.

After Oswald's stay in Russia, the KGB, by this account, constructed a "legend," or cover story, that would hide his KGB connections.

"The Soviets never intended for Oswald to kill President Kennedy, but when he did, they sent a fake defector, Yuri Nosenko, to the United States, to tell a story that would corroborate Oswald's legend," according to the convoluted article, which reads like an attempt at a fictionalized John le Carre spy novel plot.

Nosenko, Epstein alleges, approached the Central Intelligence Agency in Geneva in January, 1964, soon after Kennedy's assassination, claiming he was the KGB officer who had superintended Oswald's file during his three years in Russia.

Nosenko "stated categorically that Oswald had had no dealings with the KGB," and then asked to be allowed to defect because he claimed the KGB had wind of his CIA contacts and therefore would kill him if he returned to Russia.

The CIA brought him to the United States, given his status as an Oswald witness (his information was presented to the Warren Commission), but in turn checked out Nosenko's "legend" through "Fedora," who was the FBI's double agent.

Fedora confirmed Nosenko's claims, Epstein says. But when the CIA discovered inconsistencies in Nosenko's story, the agency suspected that Fedora had also been deliberately supplying false information, including the fake cover story.

Nosenko was subjected to intensive CIA interrogation, according to Epstein, because the agency had been warned earlier by another Soviet defector, Maj. Anatoli Golitsin, a senior KGB officer, "that the Soviets had planted one mole deep within the CIA and another within the FBI, with the objectives of promoting and advancing them to positions of leadership in American intelligence." However, Nosenko never significantly changed his story.

Epstein says he extensively interviewed Hoover's deputy director, William C. Sullivan, who died last year in a hunting accident, and Powers, who died last year in a helicopter crash, along with 200 other witnesses in gathering data for the book, which is supposed to trace Oswald's connections to Soviet and Cuban intelligence agencies as well as the CIA.